

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 SSM-03
/062 W

-----126968 221719Z /44

O 221645Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0110
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 11006

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG, IS
SUBJECT: WEIZMAN COMMENTS TO PRESS ON RETURN FROM EGYPT

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN TOLD REPORTERS UPON HIS RETURN FROM EGYPT LATE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON (DEC. 21) THAT HIS VISIT HAD BEEN PLANNED DURING SADAT'S STAY IN JERUSALEM, BUT THAT SADAT'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF IT WAS A SURPRISE. HE SAID THE PURPOSE OF HIS MISSION WAS TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S TRIP TO EGYPT. HIS TALKS HAD BEEN DEVOTED TO THE MILITARY AND SECURITY ASPECTS...OF ONE PORTION OF ISRAEL'S PEACE PROPOSALS, VIZ., THAT CONCERNING SINAI. (COMMENT: HE SPECIFICALLY DENIED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE WEST BANK). INCLUDED AMONG THE SECURITY ISSUES DISCUSSED WAS DIRECT (PHONE) COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN MILITARY (INSTEAD OF THROUGH UN AUSPICES, AS AT PRESENT).

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2. ASKED IF HE IS OPTIMISTIC, WEIZMAN REPLIED THAT HE WAS HOPEFUL. ASKED IF THE ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATING POSITIONS ARE SUFFICIENTLY NEAR THAT PEACE CAN BE EXPECTED SOON, WEIZMAN RESPONDED THAT THE POSITIONS ARE GETTING CLOSER, (AND) CLOSENESS IS RELATIVE.

3. WEIZMAN SAID THAT HE HAD MET WITH SADAT TO AIR SOME

THOUGHTS UPON WHICH THERE WAS AGREEMENT AND TO DISCUSS OTHER POINTS WHERE THERE WAS NO AGREEMENT. WITH THE SUNDAY MEETING BETWEEN BEGIN AND SADAT, THE TALKS MAY BE APPROACHING A CRUCIAL STAGE, WEIZMAN THOUGHT, ADDING THAT HE DOES NOT EXPECT IT TO BE SMOOTH BUT, LIKE THE WEATHER, BUMPY HERE AND THERE.

4. WEIZMAN DENIED REPORTS THAT THERE HAD BEEN DISCUSSIONS ON ISRAELI RELEASE OF SECURITY PRISONERS. (DEFENSE MINISTRY SPOKESMEN HAVE ADDED THAT NO PRISONERS HAVE BEEN RELEASED.)

5. THE DEFENSE MINISTER CHARACTERIZED GAMASY AS A GOOD EGYPTIAN GENERAL AND AN HONEST MAN AND "NOTHING AT ALL LIKE THE INTELLIGENCE FILE THAT WE HAVE ON HIM WHICH I EXAMINED BEFORE I WENT TO EGYPT." WHILE IN EGYPT, WEIZMAN INVITED GAMASY TO MAKE A RECIPROCAL VISIT TO ISRAEL, BUT NO DATE HAS BEEN SET.

6. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: DCM NOTES THAT WEIZMAN DEPARTED FOR CAIRO IN BOUYANT, HOPEFUL MOOD AND RETURNED WEARING SERIOUS, SOMEWHAT CHASTENED MEIN. BECAUSE OF THE CROWD OF NEWSMEN SURROUNDING HIM IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO ENGAGE IN ANY CONVERSATION OF SIGNIFICANCE AT THE AIRPORT UPON HIS RETURN. WEIZMAN WAS ABLE TO CONFIDE THAT IT HAD "NOT BEEN VERY EASY" AND THAT HE IS NOW THOROUGHLY CONVINCED SADAT'S MAJOR GOAL IS CONFIDENTIAL

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"REAL ESTATE." WEIZMAN THOUGHT HE HAD MADE "SOME MINOR GAINS" AND HE PROMISED TO DEBRIEF US IN DETAIL IN NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS. END CONFIDENTIAL
LEWIS

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